AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) The priority areas that have been identified to reduce pollution in the country include categorisation of highly polluting industries, demarcation of critically polluted areas and a time-frame to meet the prescribed emission and effluent standards through a mix of enforcement, financial incentive, clean technologies and public partnership.

The critically polluted areas which have been identified in the different States are given in the statement annexed herewith .

Statement

The critically polluted areas which have been identified in the different States include Parwanoo (Himachal Pradesh), Kalaamb (Himachal Pradesh), Howrah (West Bengal), Durgapur (West Bengal), Dhanbad (Bihar) Korba (Madhya Pradesh) Manali Madras (Tamil Nadu), Bhadravati (Karnataka), Singrauli (Uttar Pradesh), Pali (Rajasthan), North Arcot (Tamil Nadu), Gobindgarh (Punjab), Najafgarh (Delhi), Vapi (Gujarat), Chembur (Maharashtra), Greater Cochin (Kerala) and Digboi (Assam).

Setting of Society for Voluntary Action

*234. SHRIMATI SARALA MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are planning an outlay of Rs. 150 crores for setting up a society for voluntary Action for Health and Family Welfare and if so the details in this regard;

(b) whether the national level voluntary organisations like the Voluntary Health Association of India and others have been consulted and if so, what is their reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps being taken to use the existing infrastructure instead of building a new one?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) There is a proposal to set up a society to be called voluntary Action for Family Welfare and Health (VAFAH). The Society is envisaged to be the apex body to coordinate, support and promote the much needed efforts towards larger involvement of voluntary agencies and non-governmental organisations in family welfare and health programmes. The proposal is still under process and its details, including outlay etc., have not yet been finalised.

(b) Yes, Sir. A large number of national and leading voluntary organisations have been consulted in regard to the proposal through a number of conferences and meetings and they have generally supported the proposal. The Voluntary Health Association of India have, however, recently expressed the view that it may be possible for them to handle the task to be assigned to VAFAH. However, this organisation, like others, has a limited reach in the family welfare sector and as such it would not be possible to assign the role envisaged for VAFAH to it.

(c) Optimal utilisation of the existing infrastructure is being promoted through greater involvement of voluntary organisations in execution of various schemes. Some of the major well developed and experienced non-Governmental organisations are also being associated as 'Mother Units' for giving support to smaller voluntary organisations. Despite these efforts of optimal utilisation of the existing infrastructure, it was felt that setting up a new apex body like VAFAH to facilitate greater involvement of voluntary agencies and non-governmental organisations in family welfare activities.